DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 916 UD 025 627

TITLE Youth Leadership Evaluation Report 1985-86.
INSTITUTION Albuquerque Public Schools, N. Mex.
PUB DATE Nov 86
NOTE 25p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Behavior Modification; *Dropout Prevention; Elementary Secondary Education; *High Risk Students; Interpersonal Relationship; Intervention; Locus of Control; *Peer Influence; School Holding Power; Self Concept
IDENTIFIERS Albuquerque Public Schools NM; *New Mexico

ABSTRACT

The Youth Leadership Program (YLP) has been in operation in schools throughout Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico for four years. Students selected for the program represented two groups: high risk, or negative, leaders; and positive leaders. The program established situations in which pupils from both groups could work together in individual and group activities toward common goals. This evaluation is based on interviews and surveys of students, parents, school staff, and administrators. It attempts to measure particular students' self-esteem and sense of control over their lives. Responses show the YLP has been highly successful in helping students gain self-confidence and a sense of belonging and involvement. Participants and their parents were enthusiastic about the program. Students made friends more easily. Teachers and principals noted an increased awareness of others' feelings, as well as improved behavior and self-control. (Author/PS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

6-22-89

ED287916

Youth Leadership Program

Evaluation Report

1985--86

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jennifer S. Johns
Albuquerque Public Schools

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

UD025627

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PLANNING, RESEARCH
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**ALBUQUERQUE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

725 University, S.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106

BOARD OF EDUCATION

ROBERT SANTIAGO
President

WAYNE BINGHAM
Vice-President and
Chairperson/Finance Committee

MARK S. SANCHEZ
Secretary

IRA ROBINSON
Member

JOHN CANTWELL
Member

LENORE WOLFE
Member

RALPH SIGALA
Member

LILLIAN C. BARNA
Superintendent

MARY K. NEBGEN
Deputy Superintendent, Instructional Services

PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND ACCOUNTABILITY
Carol Robinson, Director

Sandra O'Neal, Assistant Director
for Testing and Evaluation

Prepared by:

Jennifer S. Johns
District Program Evaluation Specialist

Nancy Sheehy
External Evaluator

November, 1986

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Administrative Summary---------- i

Program Description---------- 1

History---------- 1

Goals---------- 1

Student Population---------- 1

Program Implementation---------- 2

Evaluation Design---------- 3

Data Collection---------- 3

Impact of the Youth Leadership Program According to Students, School Staffs, and Parents---------- 5

Student Opinions---------- 5

Teacher Opinions---------- 6

Table 1 Percent of Positive Leaders in YLP Showing Behavior Changes According to Teachers---------- 7

Table 2 Percent of Negative Leaders in YLP Showing Behavior Changes According to Teachers---------- 7

Teacher and Counselor Opinions---------- 8

Principal Opinions---------- 9

Parent Opinions---------- 9

Table 3 Percent of Positive Leaders in YLP Showing Behavior Changes According to Parents---------- 10

Table 4 Percent of Negative Leaders in YLP Showing Behavior Changes According to Parents---------- 10

Student Self-Esteem and Locus of Control---------- 15

Self-Esteem Results---------- 15

Table 5 Pre and Posttest Mean Scores of Positive and Negative Leaders on Self-Esteem Test---------- 15

Locus of Control Results---------- 16

Table 6 Pre and Posttest Mean Scores of Positive and Negative Leaders on Locus of Control Test----- 16

Summary and Conclusions---------- 17

References---------- 18

Administrative Summary

The Youth Leadership Program (YLP) has been in operation in schools throughout Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico for four years. During the 1985-86 school year, thirteen schools throughout the state were served, with three schools in Albuquerque being chosen for an indepth evaluation. These schools were: A. Montoya Elementary, Washington Middle School, and Albuquerque High School. A total of 152 students in grades 3-12 participated in program activities which were designed to develop leadership skills, prevent substance abuse, improve self-esteem, and increase feelings of control over life events.

Students selected for the program represented two groups: high risk or negative leaders and low risk or positive leaders. Negative leaders were considered to be high risk students in terms of their potential for future academic, social, and personal success. These students, who made up one-half of the total program enrollment, typically had histories of vandalism, fighting, and school problems. Positive leaders were viewed, in general, as having mostly satisfactory relationships with adults and other adolescents, and leading productive life styles. Students in both groups were recognized as leaders by their peers, but in ways which differed greatly in levels of acceptability according to societal standards.

The program established situations in which both positive and negative leaders could work together in individual and group activities toward common goals. Typical activities included: guest speakers on topics of interest and benefit to students, organized visitation experiences to community agencies, leadership training camps, peer tutoring and counseling, and involvement in community projects such as volunteer work with senior citizens and the Barelas Low Income Housing Project.

The evaluation design included interviews and surveys of students, parents, and school staffs, and administration of an instrument to measure participating students' self-esteem and sense of control over their lives. The responses of students, parents, counselors, teachers, and principals on surveys and in interviews, as well as pre and post measures of students' sense of self-esteem and control over their lives indicate that the Youth Leadership Program was highly successful in accomplishing its goals. School staffs as a whole were supportive of the program and observed positive changes in most students. They felt the Youth Leadership Program helped students gain self-confidence and a sense of belonging and involvement. Students who previously were shy and withdrawn reportedly made friends more easily and were more confident about speaking up in public. Teachers also expressed the opinion that the YLP increased students' awareness of others' feelings and improved their knowledge of the community in which they lived. Teachers and principals noted improved behavior and self-control in students, as well as improved ability to think for themselves in spite of peer pressure. Principals attributed a decrease in fighting and substance abuse to participation in the YLP.

Participants and their parents were very enthusiastic about the program and expressed a strong desire to continue the program during the 1986-87 school year. YLP students felt they had become leaders or models for other students and were more responsible than in the past. They indicated that the YLP contributed to a better attitude, improved feelings of confidence, decreased drug use, and better relationships with others. Some students said they had improved their grades and attended class more often as a result of being in the YLP. Students confirmed the opinions of school personnel regarding the

Administrative Summary

The Youth Leadership Program (YLP) has been in operation in schools throughout Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico for four years. During the 1985-86 school year, thirteen schools throughout the state were served, with three schools in Albuquerque being chosen for an indepth evaluation. These schools were: A. Montoya Elementary, Washington Middle School, and Albuquerque High School. A total of 152 students in grades 3-12 participated in program activities which were designed to develop leadership skills, prevent substance abuse, improve self-esteem, and increase feelings of control over life events.

Students selected for the program represented two groups: high risk or negative leaders and low risk or positive leaders. Negative leaders were considered to be high risk students in terms of their potential for future academic, social, and personal success. These students, who made up one-half of the total program enrollment, typically had histories of vandalism, fighting, and school problems. Positive leaders were viewed, in general, as having mostly satisfactory relationships with adults and other adolescents, and leading productive life styles. Students in both groups were recognized as leaders by their peers, but in ways which differed greatly in levels of acceptability according to societal standards.

The program established situations in which both positive and negative leaders could work together in individual and group activities toward common goals. Typical activities included: guest speakers on topics of interest and benefit to students, organized visitation experiences to community agencies, leadership training camps, peer tutoring and counseling, and involvement in community projects such as volunteer work with senior citizens and the Barelas Low Income Housing Project.

The evaluation design included interviews and surveys of students, parents, and school staffs, and administration of an instrument to measure participating students' self-esteem and sense of control over their lives. The responses of students, parents, counselors, teachers, and principals on surveys and in interviews, as well as pre and post measures of students' sense of self-esteem and control over their lives indicate that the Youth Leadership Program was highly successful in accomplishing its goals. School staffs as a whole were supportive of the program and observed positive changes in most students. They felt the Youth Leadership Program helped students gain self-confidence and a sense of belonging and involvement. Students who previously were shy and withdrawn reportedly made friends more easily and were more confident about speaking up in public. Teachers also expressed the opinion that the YLP increased students' awareness of others' feelings and improved their knowledge of the community in which they lived. Teachers and principals noted improved behavior and self-control in students, as well as improved ability to think for themselves in spite of peer pressure. Principals attributed a decrease in fighting and substance abuse to participation in the YLP.

Participants and their parents were very enthusiastic about the program and expressed a strong desire to continue the program during the 1986-87 school year. YLP students felt they had become leaders or models for other students and were more responsible than in the past. They indicated that the YLP contributed to a better attitude, improved feelings of confidence, decreased drug use, and better relationships with others. Some students said they had improved their grades and attended class more often as a result of being in the YLP. Students confirmed the opinions of school personnel regarding the

YLP's positive effects on their awareness of others' feelings, willingness to help others, and ability to make friends. Students who participated in the YLP felt significantly more in control of their lives at the end of the school year as measured by a locus of control instrument.

Parents not only confirmed the changes noted by the school staffs and the students themselves, but added that their children had become more generous and giving of themselves and their time. They also felt the program helped students focus on their future and make good decisions about careers, drug use, and safety that could have substantial impact much later in their lives. Parents felt the program benefited not just the students, but also their families, and shared the opinion of principals that the program could potentially benefit the entire community.

Youth Leadership Program
1985-86
Program Description

History

The Youth Leadership Program (YLP) began at Ernie Pyle Middle School, in the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) during the 1982-83 school year, under the leadership of Ms. Yvonne Kauffman, who was then Assistant Principal at Ernie Pyle. The program was well received the first year, and was continued in 1983-84. In 1984-85, Ms. Kauffman was successful in securing external funding from the Juvenile Justice Committee (JJC) and the New Mexico Health and Environment Department, and the program was expanded into seven schools in three New Mexico school districts. Through continued funding from the JJC in 1985-86, thirteen schools throughout the state were served. The three schools selected for evaluation in APS were A. Montoya Elementary, Washington Middle School, and Rio Grande High School.

The program as originally conceived by Ms. Kauffman involved establishing situations where students who were identified as positive leaders worked in individual and group activities with students who were identified as negative leaders. Negative leaders were considered high-risk students in terms of their potential for future academic, social, and personal success. These students, who made up one-half of the total program enrollment, typically had histories of vandalism, fighting, and school problems. Positive leaders were viewed, in general, as having mostly satisfactory relationships with adults and other adolescents and leading productive life styles. Students in both groups were recognized as leaders by their peers, but in ways which differed greatly in levels of acceptability according to societal standards.

Goals

The goals of the YLP during the 1985-86 school year were to:

- Prevent substance abuse
- Modify the disruptive behavior of negative leaders at school
- Provide avenues for negative leaders to become more involved in productive activities and thereby increase their sense of self-worth
- Increase the negative leaders' constructive involvement in their school and community and, thus, decrease their involvement in delinquent activities
- Break down barriers between positive and negative leaders and give both groups instruction in leadership skills.

Student Population

At the three schools where the YLP was evaluated, according to pre and post-test records, 152 students in grades three through twelve participated in program activities. Sixty of the students were from Rio Grande High School, 46 from Washington Middle School, and 45 from A. Montoya Elementary School. Data on leadership status and gender were not available for all students, but according to existing records, positive and negative leaders were about equally represented in the program as were males and females. In addition, the proportion of males and females in the positive and negative leadership roles was about equal.

Program Implementation

School-based professional adult leaders, who worked with the student participants on a day-to-day basis, were identified in each school. These adult leaders assisted Ms. Kauffman in the administration of the program while she coordinated the program for all schools. The program varied from school to school, but students typically spent from two to five hours per week in leadership instruction or YLP activities.

Working in collaboration with the program's school-based adult leaders, the program coordinator located speakers for leadership groups, organized visitation experiences to courts, arranged tours of juvenile detention facilities, arranged and provided mentorship experiences, and worked with school level adult leaders, student groups, teachers, and community leaders to organize summer experiences for students.

School level leadership groups sent representatives to leadership experiences in Provo, Utah; Window Rock, Arizona; Tempe, Arizona; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Denver, Colorado; Lake Tahoe, Nevada; and the University of New Mexico. Participation in these activities provided a variety of growth and leadership experiences for students.

Several leadership groups planned and carried out activities with individual senior citizens and the Barelas Low Income Housing Project. Activities included safety inventories, yardwork, and housework. Students also interviewed senior citizens and wrote human interest articles about their experiences and about the citizens themselves.

Some students interviewed prisoners in the Albuquerque jail and the Los Lunas Correctional Center, visited Chidren's Court, and toured the Youth Detention Center and the District Youth Diagnostic Center. Several leadership groups invited guest speakers who shared information and experiences with students on a variety of topics including substance abuse, juvenile justice, students' rights, prejudice, discrimination, and conflict resolution.

Students were given instruction in problem-solving techniques, peer counseling, peer tutoring, and other aspects of leadership. Field trips were organized so that students could experience horizon-expanding opportunities. Students were encouraged to consider becoming involved in community projects; decisions regarding choices of community projects were made by individual school leadership groups.

Evaluation Design

In January of 1986, an independent evaluator was chosen by Planning, Research, and Accountability (PRA) to develop and implement a plan to determine the YLP's effectiveness in achieving its stated goals and objectives. The overall purpose of the design was to ascertain the impact of the program on both positive and negative leaders.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions designed to determine the impact were the following:

- Did the students who participated in the YLP show an increase in feelings of control over their lives and self-esteem?
- Did the negative leaders show more improvement in feelings of control over their lives and self-esteem than the positive leaders?
- What changes in students were noticed by the teachers, parents, principals, counselors, and the students themselves as a result of participation in the YLP?
- What were the opinions of teachers, principals, and parents regarding the benefits of the YLP?

With a PRA evaluation specialist and the YLP project coordinator, the external evaluator designed a plan to address these questions which included data collection from students, teachers, counselors, principals, and parents. The data collection methods are described below.

Data Collection

Students participated in three evaluation activities. First, to assess their increase in sense of self-esteem and feelings of control over their lives, students were asked to complete a 50-item test containing items from self-esteem and locus of control rating scales. The test was administered at the beginning and end of the school year. Second, students completed a brief questionnaire on whether being in the YLP had helped them and, if so, how it had helped them. They also were asked what they thought were the most and least beneficial aspects of the program. Third, students from each of the three schools were interviewed to obtain data on how they thought their behavior had changed as a result of being in the YLP and what aspects of the program contributed to those changes.

School staff members provided information by completing surveys and interviews. At the end of the school year, a random sample of teachers completed surveys which requested information on changes in the attitudes and behavior of the YLP students and opinions of the most and least effective aspects of the YLP. In addition, teachers and counselors from each school were interviewed to obtain similar information to that obtained by the surveys, but in a less structured format which provided an opportunity for more detailed responses. Finally, principals at each school with a YLP group were interviewed individually to obtain their opinions of the effectiveness of the program.

The parents who attended the awards night programs at the end of the year participated in surveys and interviews. All of the parents were asked to complete a brief survey regarding any changes in attitudes and behavior they had noted in their sons and daughters. They were also asked to comment on the most and least effective aspects of the YLP. Interviews were conducted with a small group of volunteer parents to obtain their opinions of the YLP and information on the changes they had noticed in their children which they attributed to participation in the YLP.

In the following sections, the results of the evaluation are presented. The first section includes the opinions of students, parents, teachers, counselors, and principals regarding the impact of the Youth Leadership Program. The second section contains the results of the locus of control and self-esteem test administered to participating students.

Impact of the YLP According to Students, School Staffs, and Parents

Student Opinions

All students completed a short questionnaire about the effects of the Youth Leadership Program. When students were asked what they liked most about the YLP, the three most frequent responses were "activities," "helping others," and "everything." Students mentioned field trips, the judicial board, camp, mentorships, guest speakers, and community projects as specific activities that they liked the most. In response to what they liked the least, most of the students replied "nothing." Other responses were that students thought the YLP meetings were too infrequent or too short, or they did not like the time or the place the YLP meetings were held. Some students indicated that they didn't like other members of the group. Students at the elementary grade levels said they disliked missing their regular class or recess.

When asked if the YLP had helped them, students almost unanimously responded that it had. In explaining how the YLP had helped, most students said they had learned to be leaders or models for other students. Other responses indicated that the YLP had contributed to a better attitude, improved feelings of confidence, decreased drug use, and better relationships with others. Some students mentioned that they had improved their grades and attended class more often as a result of being in the YLP.

In addition to the student questionnaires, 15 students from the three schools were interviewed. Positive and negative leaders were equally represented in these interviews. When asked what changes the students had noticed in themselves that were a result of being in the YLP, students said that they were more responsible, more aware of others' feelings, and more likely to help others. They also said they were able to get to know people better and that they were not as embarrassed to talk in front of other people as they had been prior to the YLP. At all grade levels, students talked about an improvement in school-related problems. Several students mentioned that in the past they were in more fights. Some students indicated that the YLP caused them to think more about their future. One student said that prior to being in the YLP he used drugs and was a disciplinary problem in school; he was in fights, burned trash cans, and spray painted the buildings. He is now president of his class and is making high grades. Another student said she felt hopeless enough to be thinking of suicide until she joined this group. All of the students interviewed said they were more informed about substance abuse as a result of the YLP. Some students who had never experimented with drugs indicated they would not try them and a few students who had been drug users reported they had quit. One high school student said that not only has he stopped selling drugs, but he hasn't used drugs in four months.

When asked what about the YLP contributed to these changes, the students talked about program activities such as guest speakers, projects to help senior citizens, meeting and talking to people, serving on the judicial board, tutoring, and earning points for their activities. In addition, students specifically mentioned that the counseling provided by the project coordinator and other help from the coordinator and the principal had contributed to these changes. Some students said they tried to model their behavior after the project coordinator.

Teacher Opinions

Ninety-four teachers of students who were in the program at the end of the year were sent questionnaires to ascertain how the YLP had affected their students. Fifty-five teachers or 59% responded. The teachers were asked to rate the YLP students in five areas: getting along with others, demonstrating leadership, being a good example, feeling important at school, and feeling in control of one's life. The majority of the teachers agreed that the YLP students demonstrated these skills, but the responses for students who were positive leaders were more favorable on all items than for negative leaders. Teachers were also asked to indicate whether the students had learned these skills in the Youth Leadership Program or outside of it. With the exception of getting along well with others, the other four skills areas were attributed to the influence of the YLP.

The teachers were asked to evaluate changes in the students' classroom behavior in five areas during the school year. These were: academic achievement, classroom behavior, group participation, attitude toward school, and attendance. In all of these areas except group participation, more of the negative leaders than the positive student leaders were rated as showing improvement. However, it was indicated by teachers that fewer of the positive leaders needed to improve in these areas. For the positive leaders, the most improvement was noted in group participation, with slightly more than half of the students who were rated showing an improvement in this area. This was followed by attitude toward school (41%), academic achievement (35%), classroom behavior (35%), and attendance (12%). The attendance of these students was already quite good according to the teachers. See Table 1 on the following page.

More than half of the negative leaders showed improvement in academic achievement (57%), attitude toward school (57%), and classroom behavior (57%), and exactly half of the students improved in group participation. The smallest number of students showed improvement in attendance (18%), but again teachers indicated that 41% of the students did not need to improve their attendance. See Table 2 on the following page.

Table 1
Percent of Positive Leaders in YLP
Showing Behavior Changes According to Teachers

	Worse %	No Change %	Improved %	No Change Needed %	N
Academic Achievement	6	18	35	41	17
Classroom Behavior	6	24	35	35	17
Group Participation	0	24	52	24	17
Attitude Toward School	0	24	41	35	17
Attendance	0	24	12	64	17

Table 2
Percent of Negative Leaders in YLP
Showing Behavior Changes According to Teachers

	Worse %	No Change %	Improved %	No Change Needed %	N
Academic Achievement	10	19	57	14	21
Classroom Behavior	14	19	55	14	22
Group Participation	5	31	50	14	22
Attitude Toward School	9	27	55	9	22
Attendance	14	27	18	41	22

Finally, teachers were asked to indicate the most and least beneficial aspects of the Youth Leadership Program. Teachers cited an improvement in self-confidence as a beneficial result of the program. For example, one teacher responded, "(my student) seems to have improved her self-image and self-confidence." Teachers also mentioned that the group provided "a sense of belonging" or involvement and helped students make friends more easily. Several teachers also noted the contributions made by the YLP to academic areas. A comment which exemplifies this is, "The group makes her feel like a leader of the school and that transfers to the classroom and her achievement." Teachers also expressed the opinion that the YLP increased students' awareness of others' feelings and improved their knowledge of the community in which they lived. One teacher commented, "He has become more aware of what is going on around him, i.e., the needs of senior citizens, state government, and what the community is all about," while another responded, "She seems to be very kind hearted towards everyone she's around." Teachers also believed that the YLP helped students improve their behavior, gain self-control, and think for themselves. For example, "(my student) no longer seems to do what his peers tell him," and "Before leadership group was established she was behind lots of fights." A few teachers also observed that the group had helped students become role models or leaders and that this had had positive consequences for them. One teacher said the YLP had given her student "respect, responsibility, and recognition."

The least beneficial aspect of the YLP according to teachers was the amount of time missed from class. However, in one instance the teacher commented that it wasn't too much of a problem because the student made up the work. A few teachers said that they hadn't noticed any benefit from the group or that the group might have had a negative influence. For example, "She began to believe she was exempt from some school rules because she belonged to leadership group," or "Being around some peers who may have some negative influence as (my student) is easily swayed." The majority of the teachers, however, indicated that there were no aspects of the program that were least beneficial or they cited a positive aspect as in the following comment: "At the beginning of the semester (my student) felt the leadership group was more important than school work. It took many months before he realized that the group and school were working together for him, not against him. He went from a failing "F" student in the fall of 1985 to a "B" student in the spring of 1986."

Teacher and Counselor Opinions

Nine school sponsors for the YLP groups, including one teacher and two counselors at each school, were interviewed at the end of the 1985-86 school year. When asked what changes they had noticed in the YLP participants, they answered that for some students the YLP made a difference in their behavior but for others, it did not. One change they cited was that students were more responsible. They also indicated that the YLP students gained confidence; a few changed from being shy and withdrawn to being able to talk out more in groups. One comment was that, "Invisible students are seen now."

When asked what in the YLP might account for these differences the school sponsors mentioned a variety of things. For example, they felt that the group provided opportunities for setting goals, taking responsibility, making choices, and practicing problem-solving skills. In addition, they believed that structured consequences for their actions were beneficial to students. They also thought that the opportunity for role-playing and service projects contributed to positive changes in the students.

Principal Opinions

The principals of the three participating schools were asked about the role the YLP played in their schools, the changes they noticed in the YLP students which were attributable to the program, and how their schools benefited from having a YLP program.

In response to the question about the role of the YLP, the principals answered that they thought the program was a continuation of the program which was started at Ernie Pyle. They saw the YLP as a way of redirecting the negative behavior of students who were influential with their peers. Two of the principals said that the program developed leadership qualities in the students.

The principals mentioned that some students changed quite dramatically as a result of the YLP. For instance, some students who were not able to speak publicly or interact socially showed significant improvement in these areas. In a few instances, students who were involved in substance abuse or fighting on campus had decreased or discontinued these activities. The principals did mention that one cannot expect to make a big difference in one year with all students. One principal stated that change depends on the students themselves "and what they're ready for."

According to the principals, the schools benefited by a decrease in fights, an increase in students' sharing of ideas, an improvement in relationships among students from different backgrounds, and an involvement of students in the community (e.g., the Rotary Club, Toastmasters, helping senior citizens) which brought positive recognition to the students and the school.

Parent Opinions

Parents who attended an awards night at the end of the school year were asked to complete a brief questionnaire. A total of 33 parents completed the questionnaire, which was identical to the teacher questionnaire except for the omission of items pertaining to changes in classroom behavior. The parents were asked to rate their sons or daughters in five areas: getting along with others, demonstrating leadership, being a good example, feeling important at school, and feeling in control of one's life. The majority of parents agreed that their children demonstrated these skills or attributes. Unlike the teachers, the parents' responses to these questions for the students who were designated as negative leaders were in most cases more favorable than for the positive leaders.

When asked whether these behaviors were learned in the YLP or outside of it, parents of the negative leaders unanimously felt that these behaviors were learned in the YLP. Parents of the positive leaders attibuted some of the behaviors to the influence of the YLP and others to factors outside the YLP. Most of the parents of positive leaders felt that how well their children got along with others was not related to the YLP. Half of these parents believed their children were more responsible as a result of being in the YLP. The other behaviors - leadership skills, setting a good example, and playing an important role in school, were felt to be the result of the YLP, according to the majority of parents of positive leaders.

The parents were asked to evaluate changes in their daughters' or sons' behavior in three areas: academic achievement, attitude toward school, and attendance. When compared with the teachers' responses to these items, the parents rated their children as showing improvement more often than did the teachers.

More of the negative leaders' parents rated their children as having improved in academic achievement and attendance than did parents of the positive leaders; however, fewer of the positive leaders needed to change in these areas. An improvement in attendance was attributed by parents almost equally to both positive and negative leaders. For the positive leaders, the most improvement was noted in attitude toward school (67%), followed by academic achievement (56%), and attendance (22%). For the negative leaders the most improvement was noted by parents in academic achievement (83%), followed by attitude toward school (66%), and attendance (33%). See Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3
Percent of Positive Leaders in YLP
Showing Behavior Changes According to Parents

	Worse %	No Change %	Improved %	No Change Needed %	N
Academic Achievement	6	11	56	27	18
Attitude Toward School	0	6	67	27	18
Attendance	0	34	22	44	18

Table 4
Percent of Negative Leaders in YLP
Showing Behavior Changes According to Parents

	Worse %	No Change %	Improved %	No Change Needed %	N
Academic Achievement	0	0	83	17	6
Attitude Toward School	0	17	66	17	6
Attendance	0	33	33	33	6

In interpreting these results several limitations should be considered. First, surveys were completed for 33 of the 152 students, about 22%. It was possible to determine leadership status for 24 of these surveys. Second, surveys were completed by three times as many parents of positive leaders (18) as negative leaders (6). Therefore, the percentages may be misleading. Third, surveys were completed by parents attending an awards night, and it is not known whether these results are representative of the parents of all participating students. It is possible that those students whose parents attended the awards programs had improved more than the students whose parents did not attend. Therefore, differences in teacher and parent perceptions of changes in students may be an artifact of the sample or may be the result of other factors. One possible explanation is that changes in behavior might be more readily apparent to parents who know their children better, and spend more time with them. An alternative explanation is that parental expectations may be more maleable than teacher expectations because parents have a more personal stake in their children's welfare. A third explanation is that the YLP students' behavior may have been different at home than at school.

Parents also were asked to comment on the most significant changes they had seen in their children that they attributed to the YLP, as well as the most and least beneficial aspects of the program.

The area in which the most parents noted improvement was in the students' awareness of and willingness to help others. For example, one parent commented, "My child has shown great character development. He is now much more considerate toward us and other people." Another parent responded, "She got great satisfaction from helping others." A third parent noted that the most significant change in his/her child was, "the ability to help others, to think of others' needs before hers." Parents also commented on changes in self-confidence, responsibility, and academics. One parent noted that his/her child had "acquired more confidence and assertiveness," while another parent remarked that his/her daughter "seems more confident, more willing to do new things; she was a bit shy." One parent who had two children participating in the program said, "They both are a bit more responsible and caring of other people and property." A few parents commented on changes in their children's attitudes or awareness of career opportunities and leadership skills. One parent said, "I see an all around positive attitude change regarding (my daughter's) academic work and in getting along with other students." Another parent noticed a "positive attitude about self and school, more pride in what she is doing at school, i.e., that she was important, and more enthusiasm for school, especially Youth Leadership activities." A high school parent summarized the changes he/she had noted with "(my child) has a better attitude about self, school, and life."

Many of the parents' responses to the question about the most beneficial aspects of the YLP were similar to the responses to the previous question. Parents noted changes in self-confidence, responsibility, and acceptance of others. In addition to these, parents also mentioned specific activities that they felt had benefited their children, such as, serving on the Judicial Board, interviewing police officers and paramedics, participating in the substance abuse program, and tutoring. Several parents remarked that their children now feel more confident about public speaking. One parent responded to this question by saying, "I am extremely proud and grateful that (my daughter) has the privilege and honor to belong to such a wonderful program. Thank you!"

Almost all parents remarked that there were no aspects of the YLP that were least beneficial for their children. Some parents again took the opportunity to mention something positive in the space provided.

In addition to the information provided on the survey, a few parents from each school were asked to volunteer for a group interview. Eleven parents representing the three schools were interviewed. The interviews took place during the awards night activities. Parents were asked questions similar to those on the surveys, but in greater detail. In addition, they were asked what they thought might have been different if their children had not participated in the YLP, how their children used what they learned in the YLP at home, why they wanted the program to continue, and how the school and community benefited from having a Youth Leadership Program.

When asked to cite specific examples of changes they had seen in their children since the beginning of the YLP and to what they attributed them, the parents responded in a variety of ways. One common response was that their children had become more responsible and more giving of themselves and their time. An example of this was collecting canned goods after school. One mother said her child had become aware that some families couldn't even afford to donate one can of food. She felt this had opened her daughter's eyes and made her realize that she is fortunate. One parent felt her child was always taking from people before, but that now she was more giving and more open. Another said her daughter had grown up.

In addition to becoming more generous and aware, the parents felt the students had become more "neighborly." They especially believed the activities with the senior citizens had been beneficial to the students because the students realized that "senior citizens are people, too." They thought the students had learned to communicate better, especially with older people. One parent mentioned a special woman her daughter began calling "Grandma." Beyond these personal relationships, one parent felt her child had become more aware of the larger community by reading the newspaper. Another felt that activities like the leadership camps and trips to other places enabled the students to meet many people and become more aware of and comfortable with different cultures. One mother mentioned that her daughter still writes to friends she made at camp.

The parents said the program had not just benefited the children, but had taught them things also, such as, information about substance abuse and traffic safety. Several of the parents of elementary students cited an increased awareness in their children of the ill effects of drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. They felt that their children, by learning about substance abuse at an early age, would be better equipped to deal with peer pressure at middle and high school. They also felt that the program would affect not just the children directly involved, but could reach many students through the influence of the YLP participants. One parent said that the drug education kept her "on her toes" and helped her "come to grips with the reality of drugs." Several parents had not realized previously that substance abuse could be a problem as early as elementary school.

Parents also said that the driving safety program had made a big impact on their children as well as on themselves. Several parents said that their children made <u>them</u> wear seatbelts now. They indicated that they now use more of a family approach to issues such as wearing seatbelts.

Several of the parents mentioned how wonderful it had been for their children to tutor other students. One parent said that his child was a "helping kind of kid" and that tutoring and feeling needed had been very good for him. A mother said that the tutoring and other aspects of the program made her child feel better about himself. Before the YLP he used to have a terrible temper and everything was either "totally wonderful or the pits" but after he was involved in the YLP this leveled out. She attributed this to his feeling important now. She said he had very low self-esteem before, but that the program had "given him a niche where he didn't have to compete."

Parents cited other examples of behavior changes in their children. One parent said that his younger son was always trying to live up to his older brother. As a result of the program the youngest son's self-esteem had improved because the program was something special that his older brother didn't have. Other parents said that their children were now more involved in school and paid more attention to their work. One father said when he used to ask his son what he did in school today, the boy would reply, "Nothing," but now he tells all about what he did in the YLP.

Several parents indicated how beneficial the Judiciary Board had been. The parent whose child had a bad temper said that her son was now much more sensitive to other children's feelings and not so hard on them. A father said that they try to make decisions as a family now and that his son's input is more thoughtful because of their experiences on the Judiciary Board.

Other aspects cited included an awareness of crime through visits to the Detention Center, an awareness of careers and an opportunity to practice leadership skills. One student had asked her parents, "I wonder how it is to be a lawyer and to help the people in jail?" Several parents felt visiting the Detention Center had made a big impression on their children.

Some parents felt that the way in which the program was organized and run contributed to changes in their children. They specifically mentioned the influence of the project coordinator in helping their children. They also thought that sharing ideas and helping others had been beneficial to the students.

When asked what might have been different for their children without the YLP most of the parents indicated that the positive changes that had occurred in their children would not have happened. One parent said "School would have been more of a drag for my son." Others felt their children might not have developed feelings of self-confidence and assertiveness, the ability to make their own decisions, or the ability to speak for themselves, but not for others.

In response to a question about how the children use what they've learned at home some parents felt their children were more responsible for their actions at home and at school. Several parents mentioned that their children were more tolerant and that they had learned that "old folks are human." One parent said her daughter used to be selfish with her time but that she'd learned to share and give of herself. Another parent said her son used to come home with a "bad attitude" but now when that happens they ask him to think about how he would handle the situation in the YLP.

Parents wanted their children to be able to continue in the YLP because they believed there was a potential for further growth. They indicated that the program gave the opportunity to kids to feel in control of their lives, to make decisions on their own, and to practice being a leader. They felt the program made school more enjoyable. They also expressed the opinion that the program gave the kids a head start by helping them develop some independent behavior and make intelligent decisions. One parent said that the children could "continue to build self confidence; they are just now spreading their wings."

Parents cited several benefits to the school and the community of having a Youth Leadership Program. Parents said they felt the children would become more responsible adults, that they would be more capable of making decent decisions, and more able to resist the pressure of their peers, especially in relation to drug use. One parent responded that the children were learning how to negotiate and compromise and that it is okay to be responsible. Another parent felt it was important for kids to help senior citizens and to develop empathy for those who are in less fortunate situations. Finally, parents felt the program helped change the public's negative image of students in these schools and enabled the students to have high expectations for themselves.

Student Self-Esteem and Locus of Control

To measure the effects of the YLP on the students' sense of self-esteem and feelings of control over their lives, a 50-item survey was administered at the beginning and end of the school year. The survey was a combination of items taken from two instruments, a Self-Esteem Inventory developed by Coopersmith and a Locus of Control Scale by Nowicki and Strickland (1973). Students were asked to indicate their responses on a four point scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), or strongly disagree (4). A total of 66 of the 152 students (43%) served by the program completed both pre and posttests.

Locus of control items and self-esteem items were treated separately for analysis. The locus of control items had a fairly high reliability (α = .74) as did the self-esteem items (α = .61). These measurements are indices of the homogeneity of items in the test, or the degree to which the responses to individual items correlate with the total test score (Mehrens & Lehman, 1978). Therefore, it can be assumed that all of the items on the survey are measuring issues related to locus of control and self-esteem.

An average score was calculated for each set of items on the pretest and compared to the average scores on the posttest. An analysis of variance with repeated measures was performed to determine if students made statistically significant improvements in self-esteem and feelings of control over their lives between pre and post administration.

Self-Esteem Results

Items measuring self-esteem included such statements as "There are lots of things about myself I would change if I could," and "I'm popular with people my own age." The self-esteem of positive leaders (M = 62.8) was significantly higher than the self-esteem of negative leaders (M = 57.1) on the pre and posttest combined, $F(1, 62) = 22.03$, $p<.001$. This means that the positive leaders as a group had a significantly higher self-esteem than the negative leaders. However, neither group's sense of self-esteem changed very much during the school year. The average score for all students on self-esteem items on the pretest was 59.6, while the average score on the posttest was 60.3, a change which was not statistically significant.

Table 5
Pre and Posttest Mean Scores of
Positive and Negative Leaders on Self-Esteem Test

	Pre	Post	Total
Positive	62.2	63.3	62.8
Negative	56.9	57.3	57.1
Total	59.6	60.3	60.0

These results are not surprising in light of the stability of self-esteem over time. They indicate that although the positive leaders had significantly higher self-esteem than the negative leaders at the beginning of the year, the self-esteem of YLP students as a whole did not change substantially. Although it is possible that program activities did not improve students' sense of self-esteem, it is equally possible that self-esteem might change after several years of intervention.

Locus of Control Results

Items measuring locus of control or feelings of control over one's life included such statements as "Some kids are just born lucky," and "Parents listen to what their children have to say." The locus of control of positive leaders ($M = 63.0$) was significantly higher than the locus of control of negative leaders ($M = 57.9$) on the pretest and posttest combined, $F(1, 2) = 6.43$, $p < .05$. This means that positive leaders as a group felt significantly more in control of their lives than negative leaders. In addition, the average posttest score ($M = 61.4$) for all YLP students on locus of control items was significantly higher than the average pretest score ($M = 59.3$). This means that the YLP students as a whole felt more in control of their lives at the end of the school year. The difference between pretest and posttest scores for positive and negative leaders was not statistically significant which means that both groups improved equally.

Table 6
Pre and Posttest Mean Scores of
Positive and Negative Leaders on Locus of Control Test

	Pre	Post	Total
Positive	61.9	64.0	63.0
Negative	56.8	58.9	57.9
Total	59.3	61.4	60.4

It is interesting that even the positive leaders, who felt relatively in control of their lives prior to participation in the YLP, had a greater sense of control over their lives by the end of the year.

Summary and Conclusions

Teachers, principals, counselors, and school sponsors all felt that the Youth Leadership Program helped students gain self-confidence and a sense of belonging and involvement. Students who previously were shy and withdrawn made friends more easily and were more confident about speaking up in public. Teachers also expressed the opinion that the YLP increased students' awareness of others' feelings and improved their knowledge of the community in which they lived. Teachers and principals noted improved behavior and self-control in students, as well as improved ability to think for themselves in spite of peer pressure. Principals attributed a decrease in fighting and substance abuse to participation in the YLP.

Parents and students were even more outspoken about the effects of the program. YLP students felt they had become leaders or models for other students and were more responsible than in the past. They indicated that the YLP contributed to a better attitude, improved feelings of confidence, decreased drug use, and better relationships with others. Some students said they had improved their grades and attended class more often as a result of being in the YLP. Students confirmed the opinions of school personnel regarding the YLP's positive effects on their awareness of others' feelings, willingness to help others, and ability to make friends. On a locus of control test, students who participated in the YLP felt significantly more in control of their lives at the end of the school year, not a surprising finding in light of the many positive changes students reported. Parents not only confirmed the changes noted by the school staffs and the students themselves, but added that their children had become more generous and giving of themselves and their time. They also felt the program helped students focus on their future and make improved decisions about careers, drug use, and safety that could have an impact much later in their lives. Parents indicated that many of the changes made by students were evident at home and had made an impact on the family. Parents also said they had benefited from information about substance abuse and traffic safety.

The responses of students, parents, counselors, teachers, and principals on surveys and in interviews, as well as pre and post measures of students' sense of self-esteem and control over their lives indicate that the Youth Leadership Program was highly successful. School staffs as a whole were supportive of the program and observed positive changes in most students. Participants and their parents were very enthusiastic about the program and expressed a strong desire to continue the program during the 1986-87 school year. Parents felt the program benefited not just the students, but also their families, and shared the opinion of principals that the program can benefit the entire community.

Current APS policy insures that staff members, including the project leader, will review the data and findings contained in the report. A plan which includes appropriate steps to address identified program needs will be implemented.

References

Nowicki, S., Jr., and Strickland, B.R. (1973). A locus of control scale for children. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 40, 1-7.

Mehrens, W.A. and Lehmann, I.J. (1975). Measurement and evaluation in education and psychology. New York. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc.